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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 SANAA 002015

SIPDIS

PLEASE PASS TO DOL/ILAB FOR TINA FAULKNER AND DRL/IL FOR MARINDA HARPOLE.

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: YEMEN CHILD LABOR UPDATE FOR TDA REPORT

REF: A. SECSTATE 163982

[B](#). JEDDAH 1340

[C](#). SANAA 611

[D](#). 03 SANAA 02028

[E](#). 02 SANAA 3572

[F](#). 00 SANAA 4223

[1](#)1. Summary. In Yemen, children augment family and household incomes as street vendors and workers in family businesses or on the family farm. Slavery, child prostitution and trafficking are not major issues in Yemen. Some donors express concern that child trafficking may be on the rise. Government officials and NGOs are working together to provide basic education, counseling, vocational training, and to eliminate the employment of children in hazardous jobs and arrive at a joint strategy to eliminate child labor altogether. Last year, Parliament and the Ministry of Human Rights gave increasing focus and recognition to the issue of child trafficking. End Summary.

2004 YEMEN CHILD LABOR UPDATE

[1](#)2. Begin update:

A) DOES YEMEN HAVE ADEQUATE LAWS AND REGULATIONS PROSCRIBING THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR?

Update: Pending donor funding, the ROYG will review all of its laws regarding child labor to ensure coordination between the different ministries. The law will clarify the ministries' roles and insure that they comply with international conventions. Last year's update noted that the ROYG would be completing this effort but international funding for such a project was not secured (ref d). The Ministry of Labor (MOL) conducted a baseline survey of child labor in Yemen, collecting information from trade unions, chambers of commerce and MOL branch offices. MOL estimates that there are close to half a million working children, ages 6 to 14, and that working children comprise 10 to 15 percent of the total work force.

B) DOES YEMEN HAVE ADEQUATE LAWS AND REGULATIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF PROSCRIPTIONS AGAINST THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR? ARE THERE ANY RECENT GOVERNMENTAL OR JUDICIAL INITIATIVES TO STRENGTHEN CHILD LABOR LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS?

Update: Adequate enforcement of regulations remains weak in many government ministries, not only in the MOL. Due to serious resource constraints, the MOL employs less than twenty child labor inspectors to investigate crimes throughout the entire country and was not able to hire additional inspectors as reported last year (ref d).

C) HAS YEMEN ESTABLISHED FORMAL INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS TO INVESTIGATE AND ADDRESS COMPLAINTS RELATING TO THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR?

No update required.

D) WHETHER SOCIAL PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED TO PREVENT THE ENGAGEMENT OF CHILDREN IN THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR, AND TO ASSIST IN REMOVING CHILDREN ENGAGED IN THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR?

Update: Under the auspices of the Mayor of Sanaa and supported in part by funds from the U.S. Department of Labor to the ILO, ILO/IPEC opened a rehabilitation center for victims of child labor in 2002. In the past year, IPEC began offering remedial education, vocational training, and some counseling in addition to the ongoing effort to re-integrate child laborers into mainstream schools.

E) WHETHER THE COUNTRY HAS A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY AIMED AT THE ELIMINATION OF THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR?

No update required.

F) WHETHER THE COUNTRY IS MAKING CONTINUAL PROGRESS TOWARD ELIMINATING THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR?

Update: The issue of child labor enjoys the focus and concern of the ROYG and several of its ministries, such as the MOL and the Ministry of Education. Nonetheless, the ROYG needs increased coordination between child labor officials in its ministries and with NGOs and international organizations. Progress is slow and child labor remains a significant problem for Yemeni society.

ADDENDUM ON CHILD TRAFFICKING

13. While the incidence of child trafficking appears limited, the ROYG and NGOs report that child smuggling in Yemen needs to be more closely examined (ref c). In recent months, the press occasionally reported incidents of child trafficking to Saudi Arabia. The English language weekly, "Yemen Times," reported that 40 Yemeni children a month are detained by Saudi police for street begging and repatriated. Jeddah reported on this phenomenon in ref b.

14. The ROYG acknowledges a possible problem and has taken action against child smuggling. The ROYG and UNICEF are currently working on a project to examine the nature and extent of possible internal and external child smuggling. In the past year, two child traffickers were prosecuted. One received a three-year prison sentence, a concrete example of the ROYG's efforts to combat child trafficking. Nonetheless, the ROYG's capabilities suffer from serious limitations, including extreme poverty, porous borders with Saudi Arabia and along its 1,400 km coastline, lack of training for police and security officials in identifying and preventing cases of trafficking, and a cultural acceptance of working children. To assist in the outreach against child trafficking, Post is currently seeking USG funding to launch a trafficking awareness campaign with the cooperation of the ROYG.

End Update.
KRAJESKI